WHERE ARE YOU, LORD?

She felt He would never leave her in her moments of distress. After all, He had proven it throughout her 16 years. Surely, He would not start now in this greatest disappointment of her life.

Tearfully she remembered her first tragedy. She was 9 and hurrying home from school with her twin sister Elizabeth when the fuss started.

“Stop, teacher’s pet!” an older schoolmate commanded angrily. “So you think that you’re better than the rest of us?”

The twins ignored the girl and picked up speed. They could hear their mother saying, “Never fight anyone. If a child threatens you, head quickly for home.”

“Coward!” the other girl taunted, picking up a stone. Ellen Harmon looked to see how close behind the girl was. As she turned, the girl flung the stone with all her might, shattering Ellen’s nose and plummeting her to the ground in a pool of blood.

Finally reaching home after several fainting spells, Ellen lay in a coma for three weeks. When she emerged, she found her world had changed forever. Her once pretty face was disfigured beyond even her family’s recognition. Her friends snubbed her, isolation became her constant companion, and shyness and low self-esteem replaced her cheery disposition.

“But God came through,” she told herself. “I sought Him earnestly, and He heard my cry. He showed me that I was of great value and that He loved me.” She rubbed the site of her former injury. “Without the accident, I might never have accepted Jesus.”

But that was then. What about now?

Today was October 23, the day after Jesus was supposed to return to earth and take her home. Along with other Millerites, she had staked all on His second coming. Their church had disfellowshipped the Harmons for embracing the “fanatical” doctrine of Jesus’ literal ad-

Everything on His second coming. Their church had disfellowshipped her? for three weeks. When she emerged, she found her world had changed forever. Her once pretty face was disfigured beyond even her family’s recognition. Her friends snubbed her, isolation became her constant companion, and shyness and low self-esteem replaced her cheery disposition.

“For a long time, she gazed at the eastern sky, as though she could see into heaven itself. Then sighing deeply she declared, “No, God hasn’t left Father Miller and the rest of us! We weren’t deceived. This year of preparation has been the sweetest of our lives! God has been with us mightily, converting the most hardened sinner hearing our appeal to meet Jesus.”

She smiled at the memories. “We’ve done our duty and lived up to God’s Word. He will bring us through this disappointment . . . just as He brought me through my childhood distress!”

She dried her tears and walked purposefully back to the house.

Sunday
RESPONDING

» Read Revelation 21:3, 4.

Imagine your grandmother is a famous Adventist who has served God from childhood. Through the years, God used her to establish many church schools and to help educate scores of needy students. Now she has Alzheimer’s, and your grandfather is disappointed that God hasn’t healed her. He says that God has deserted them and plans to give up on him.

What would you tell this man who taught you to love and trust God and His Word? In what ways can God be trusted to bring good out of our bad times? At what age does God stop using us to spread His love?

Monday
BIBLE ANSWERS ON CHRIST’S MINISTRY IN THE HEAVENLY SANCTUARY

» Read Hebrews 8:5; Daniel 7:9-27; Daniel 8:13, 14; Daniel 9:24-27

God is coming soon. He has given us the books of Daniel and Revelation to help us know when the end is near—He wants us to be ready and to tell others so they, too, can be ready for His coming.

How can you prepare for God’s soon coming?

How can you share this knowledge with others?

Fill in the blanks.

*He who is ___ , let him be ________ ; he who is ___ , let him be ________ ; he who is ___ , let him be ________ ; he who is ___ , let him be ________ . And behold, I am coming ___ , and My ___ is with Me, to ___ to ___ . And the angel of the Lord stood on the mountain in the east, and said, “Behold, I will send my messengers before you, and they will prepare the way before you. They will bring you through your distress . . . just as He brought me through my childhood distress!” (Revelations 22:11, 12, NKJV).
The twin subjects of the Great Disappointment and the heavenly sanctuary are important because they really address the age-old questions of whether God can be trusted, whether He cares for us, and whether He has a solution for the problem of sin.

Millerites staked everything on Jesus’ promise that He would return to earth, bring sin and suffering to an end, and take His followers home to heaven. They mistakenly concluded that the earth was the sanctuary to be cleansed by the fires of His second coming on October 22, 1844, the end of the 2300-day prophecy. Jesus patiently showed them that the heavenly sanctuary was cleansed of sin instead and that His coming was indeed near. He gave them the comfort and light they needed for their disappointment and their critics.

Although you’re an earliteen, you’ve probably been affected by one of the following situations. Divorces or firings. Deaths or defeats. Oppression or injustice. Diseases or accidents. And the list of human calamities could go on and on. Perhaps you’ve wondered, “Where’s God in all of this?” Maybe you sometimes wonder whether He cares about you and whether the long night of sin will ever end.

Early Adventists took courage from the details of the sanctuary service. In it they saw Jesus as the great high priest who was touched by their deficiencies and lived to make intercession for them. His primary focus was to forgive their sins and develop His characteristics in them. Moreover, He assured them that sin would not exist forever, using the symbols of the Old Testament sanctuary service to illustrate this fact.

Some Millerites took heart from this new revelation unlocking the Great Disappointment and pressed on to become Seventh-day Adventists. The good news of the sanctuary became their unique contribution to Christianity.

**Problem**

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**Reflecting**

**Read John 14:1-3.**

God wants us to know that He’s caring and trustworthy. He observed in the interviews.

**Connecting**

**Read John 3:16, 17.**

Review the memory verse.

Accepting it blots out the past and ensures the future, but it also enriches our present, for Jesus is concerned about our entire lives. He doesn’t destroy all forms of sin now, but He gives us the power to cope with them. In fact, He makes them agents of good instead of evil.

**Applying**

**Read Isaiah 1:18; Malachi 3:10; 2 Peter 3:9, 10.**

**Bible Insights**

Match the text with the verse.

1. Revelation 21:3, 4 (NIV)
2. John 14:3 (NIV)
3. Matthew 10:30 (NIV)
4. Psalm 77:13 (KJV)
5. 2 Peter 3:9 (NIV)
6. Habakkuk 2:3 (NIV)
7. Hebrews 10:35 (NIV)
8. Titus 1:2 (NIV)

A. “I will come back and take you . . .” _____
B. “For the revelation awaits an appointed time . . .” _____
C. “So do not throw away your confidence . . .” _____
D. “That faith and that knowledge come from the hope of life forever . . .” _____
E. “The Lord is not slow in keeping his promise . . .” _____
F. “And even the very hairs of your head . . .” _____
G. “Thy way, O God . . .” _____
H. “God’s dwelling place is now among the people, and he will dwell with them . . .” _____

**Tuesday**

**Reflecting**

**Read John 14:1-3.**

The twin subjects of the Great Disappointment and the heavenly sanctuary are important because they really address the age-old questions of whether God can be trusted, whether He cares for us, and whether He has a solution for the problem of sin.

**Wednesday**

**Bible Insights**

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**Thursday**

**Connecting**

**Read John 3:16, 17.**

Review the memory verse.

Although you’re an earliteen, you’ve probably been affected by one of the following situations. Divorces or firings. Deaths or defeats. Oppression or injustice. Diseases or accidents. And the list of human calamities could go on and on. Perhaps you’ve asked, “Where’s God in all of this?” Maybe you sometimes wonder whether He cares about you and whether the long night of sin will ever end.

The good news of the sanctuary is that God does care about you and the havoc sin has made of His planet. He sent His Son not just to sound the death knell of Satan, but to change the course of history and make intercession for sinners. The heavenly sanctuary became their unique contribution to Christianity.

God wants us to know that He’s caring and trustworthy. He encourages our curiosity and welcomes our efforts to test Him. “Come now, let us settle the matter,” He invites us in Isaiah 1:18 (NIV). “Test me,” he encourages us in Malachi 3:10 (NIV). With this in mind, use the following chart to determine His compassion, trustworthiness, and effectiveness.

In the first column, list three or four problems from the What Does This Have to Do With Me? section. Next, find three or four members of your local church who’ve experienced them and wouldn’t mind talking generally about them. Then ask, “Did God care about you in this experience? How do you know if He cared or not? How has the experience affected your relationship with Him?” Record the responses you get from the interviews.

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